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Message Text

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51
ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 H-02 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 PA-03 RSC-01 USIA-12 PRS-01 NSC-10 AID-20

EB-11 RSR-01 /085 W
---------- 125034
R 191447 Z APR 73 ZDK
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3876

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE NEW DELHI 4617

E. O. 11652: N/ A
TAGS: PINT, IN
SUBJ: CONGRESS (O) SESSION AT GAYA

FOLLOWING IS CALCUTTA 0705 DATED 19 APR 73 REPEATED TO YOU:

P R 190230 Z APR 73
FM AMCONSUL CALCUTTA
TO RUSBAE/ AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 7974
INFO RUSBAY/ AMCONSUL BOMBAY 1552
RUSBAS/ AMCONSUL MADRAS 1498
C O N F I D E N T I A L

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE CALCUTTA 0705

E. O. 11652: N/ A
TAGS: PINT, IN
SUBJ: CONGRESS(O) SESSION AT GAYA

SUMMARY: 74 TH PLENARY SESSION OF CONGRESS(O) HELD IN GAYA, BIHAR APRIL 7-10, 1973. DESPITE PARTY' S GENERALLY MISERABLE SHOWING IN 1971 AND 1972 ELECTIONS, IT WAS ABLE TO ATTRACT OVER 6,000 DELEGATES (1500 MORE THAN THE EQUIVALENT CONGRESS (R) SESSION WHICH TOOK PLACE IN CALCUTTA DECEMBER 26-29; SEE CALCUTTA 2036). IN THE SCORCHING HEAD (IT AVERAGED 112 DEGREES DURING THE PERIOD), SEVERAL FORMER ALL- INDIA
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FIGURES SEIZED OPPORTUNITY TO CASTIGATE PRIME MINISTER GANDHI, HER PARTY AND ITS LACK OF ACCOMPLISHMENT. END SUMMARY.

2. PREVAILING THEME DURING SESSION WAS THAT MRS. GANDHI CONSCIOUSLY AND STEADILY SUBVERTING MOST IMPORTANT DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS OF NATION-- INCLUDING FREE PRESS, INDEPENDENT JUDICIARY, AND CONCEPT OF LOYAL OPPOSITION, AT SAME TIME SHE ACTIVELY PROMOTING HER OWN PERSONALITY CULT.

3. MRS. TARKESWARI SINHA' S " WALK OUT" AND LATER RETURN TO SESSION DREW PRESS NOTICE AS DID NIJALINGAPPA' S STATEMENT THAT CONGRESS(R) LIKE A BEEHIVE WITH MRS. GANDHI AS QUEEN BEE. WHEN SHE GOES THE SMALLER BEES WILL FLY AWAY AND HIVE COLLAPSE.

4. RESOLUTIONS: FOUR RESOLUTIONS WERE PASSED: (A) POLITICAL, WHICH BLAMED MRS. GANDHI FOR " DEEPENING CRISIS" IN COUNTRY, MADE CHARGES NOTED ABOVE AND COMMITTED PARTY TO LAUNCH NON-VIOLENT, COUNTRYWIDE AGITATION AGAINST " AUTHORITARIANISM"; (B) ECONOMIC (MOVED BY FORMER UNION PLANNING MINISTER, ASHOKE MEHTA), WHICH CONTENDED THERE INVERSE RATIO BETWEEN MRS. GANDHI' S ASCENDANCY AND ECONOMIC GROWTH RATE. MEHTA, IN SPEECH, STATED THAT WHEN MORARJI DESAI WAS FINANCE MINISTER, INDIA' S ECONOMIC GROWTH RATE 7 PLUS PERCENT WHEREAS IT HAS NOW COME DOWN 1.5 PERCENT; HE CONCLUDED WITH SCATHING, WELL- DOCUMENTED, ATTACK ON PERFORMANCE OF PUBLIC SECTOR; (C) MINORITIES: IN OBVIOUS EFFORT PANDER TO MUSLIMS, RESOLUTION TOOK GOI TO TASK OVER ITS GENERAL LACK OF CONCERN AND SPECIFICALLY ON ITS ALLEGED DESIRE MODIFY ALIGARH MUSLIM UNIVERSITY ACT; (D) HARIJANS AND ADIVASIS: IN SIMILAR VEIN, RESOLUTION DAMNED GOI FOR NOT ADEQUATELY PROTECTING WEAKER SECTIONS OF SOCIETY.

5. LARGE TURNOUT OF DELEGATES (INCLUDING 1,000 FROM TAMIL-NADU, STRONGHOLD OF KAMARAJ) AND VIEWERS (PRESS REPORTED 100,000 AND 50,000 ATTENDED OPENING AND CLOSING SESSIONS) PROBABLY DUE TO LARGE EXTENT TO ORGANIZATIONAL WORK AND PERSONAL POPULARITY BIHAR CONGRESS(O) PRESIDENT, SATYENDRA NARAIN SINGH, M. P., WHO CONTINUES TO REPRESENT GAYA DISTRUCT IN LOK SABHA.

6. PRESIDENT, WEST BENGAL PCC(O), DR. PRATAP CHANDRA CHUNDER,
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STATED APRIL 17 IN MEETING WITH CONGENOFF THAT STATESMAN

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ARTICLES DESCRIBING CONVENTION WERE LARGELY ACCURATE.
CHUNDER OF OPINION THAT INDIA NOW AT IMPORTANT POLITICAL CROSS-
ROADS. IF ECONOMIC CONDITIONS CONTINUE TO DETERIORATE
(WHICH HE JUDGES THEY WILL), TWO THINGS MAY OCCUR. IN
NATURAL COURSE OF EVENTS, HE THOUGHT, CONGRESS (R) WOULD SPLIT
AND THE CENTRE FOLLOWING LINES NOW APPARENT IN MOST STATE
PARTIES. (HE MENTIONED JAGJIVAN RAM AS LIKELY DISSIDENT
LEADER THIS REGARD.) IF ELECTIONS ARE HELD AFTER SUCH SPLIT,
DEMOCRACY WILL BE SAFE IN INDIA. HOWEVER, CHUNDER THOUGHT
THERE SEVERAL SIGNS THAT MRS. GANDHI WOULD NOT ALLOW SUCH

DEVELOPMENTS TO OCCUR BUT WOULD RATHER SEEK " FASCISTIC
CONTROL" OF NATION, SUPPRESSING FREEDOMS IN NAME OF ECONOMIC
NECESSITIES. AS FOR ROLE OF CONGRESS(O) HE SAID IT AND JAN
SANGH ONLY NATIONAL PARTIES WHICH PEOPLE MIGHT TURN TO IN
EVENT OF EXPECTED DISILLUSIONMENT WITH MRS. GANDHI' S CATCHY
BUT CONTENTLESS SOCIALISM.
WHILE HE DID NOT MEAN TO UNDERSTATE HIS PARTY' S PROBLEMS
(FINANCIAL AND IMAGE- WISE), CHUNDER SAID HE THOUGHT CONGRESS

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*** Current Classification *** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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